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# The All-Purpose Rich Uncle

From MURRAY KEMPTON

NO could even the wildest imaginings of the Bertrand Russell of the 'sixties, have dreamed of the fantasy that the Central Intelligence Agency might have been the prime financial resource of the Congress of Cultural Freedom, whose international president was the Bertrand Russell of the 'fifties?

The revelation that the leaders of our National Student Association have for fifteen years been partially supported by a subsidy from the CIA has been one of those occasions like the moment in the spy stories when one spy's cover is broken and all the others are exposed one after another.

The CIA does not appear to have been terribly elaborate about its covers; in the case of the National Student Association, and who knows how many other expressions of the private American impulse to action and passion, it simply used "dummy" dummies of private philanthropic foundations which then passed the CIA's money along to the deserving. The list of beneficiaries of these particular foundations, among an uncalculable number whose main contributor seems to have been the CIA, includes the American Newspaper Guild, my own trade union, the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions; the American Fund for Free Jurists; and the International Secretariat of Pax Romana. The reality then would seem to be considerably more persuasive than even the most whimsical gossip which has gone about the United States for twenty years now had ever really gone so far as to suggest. This is a particularly unfortunate time for the American satirist; the nation has become the cartoon.

The National Student Association's link with the CIA was first revealed by *Ramparts*, a monthly magazine of the New Left. One of the ironies of the situation is that the NSA is just now rather firmly in control of young persons, thought of as respectable embodiments of the New Left; its present leaders appear to have been quietly moving to extricate themselves from the CIA's patronage when scandal broke upon them.

The chief instrument of their exposure was Michael Wood, NSA's former director of development, who had broken clangorously with his colleagues over the matter, taking his recollections and possibly a few relevant files with him.

The association, Wood testified, began in the early 'fifties when the CIA was impressed by the use the National Student Association could provide for debates with Communist students at international conferences. By 1965 just one of the CIA's foundations was providing \$292,000 of the National Student Association's \$800,000

budget; the instrument had been refined to the point where the CIA was contributing scholarships of \$3,000 a year to student leaders who wanted to travel and study abroad, where, with the customary paranoia, the Communists in the host countries, denounced them; we can assume, as CIA agents.

Wood charged that the National Student Association's leadership provided a regular source of CIA recruitment, and the careers of

some of its alumni gave a certain substance to his claim. Still he was especially persuasive, and rather more disturbing, when he was being less melodramatic. He cited the recollection of Philip Sherburne, president of the association in 1965, of the result when he asked the Soviet National Union of Students to invite him to Moscow. 'A CIA agent explained to Sherburne,' Wood says, 'that, since the KGB (the Soviet CIA) assumed that the NSA took its cues from the United States government, Sherburne's gesture might be interpreted as an official change in CIA policy on bilateral student contacts.'

Those alumni of the National Student Association who had gone on to CIA work were, Wood recalled, especially active when the association was debating our Vietnam policy in the summer of 1965. The agents, Wood said, were very anxious, first of all, that no absolute position be taken and concerned that the leadership did not demand a permanent cessation of the bombing. In the end the students voted to call for a halt in the bombing, and for negotiations provided the North Vietnamese showed some willingness, which last reservation, Wood said, 'satisfied the CIA lobbyists.'

The source of all these subsidies seems to have been the CIA's Covert Action Division Number Five, which by now has begun to fix itself in the imagination as the Agency's left wing. Covert Action Division Number Five indeed would appear to have been the main financial resource of what American liberalism has so long cherished as its anti-Communist left. It seems that we are just beginning to find out about ourselves.

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